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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY
REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT OF THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: REGIONAL CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES: ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SECURITY QUESTIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA
THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY - PREVENTION OF THE VIOLENT DISINTEGRATION OF STATES
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 2 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the report of the Tokyo International Conference on Preventive Strategy, which was adopted on 15 January 1998 in Tokyo.

I should be grateful if you would have the report issued as a document of the General Assembly under the items entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity", "Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly: Regional confidence-building measures: Activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa", "The

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maintenance of international security - prevention of the violent disintegration of States", "Sustainable development and international economic cooperation" and "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hisashi OWADA
Permanent Representative
of Japan to the
United Nations

Annex

Report of the Tokyo International Conference on Preventive Strategy held at Tokyo from 13 to 15 January 1998

1. The International Conference on Preventive Strategy met at Tokyo from 13 to 15 January 1998 to discuss the problem of how to strengthen the preventive capacities of the United Nations system for the prevention of conflicts in cooperation with regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other interested parties. The Conference took as its starting point the concept that prevention is better than cure. The need for such an effective preventive strategy is keenly felt at the present juncture, where the proliferation of regional conflicts, and especially conflicts of an intra-state character, are becoming rampant, destroying the basic fabric of society and jeopardizing the very foundation for governance.

2. Recognizing that this Tokyo Conference is but a first step in the complex but necessary process of formulating an integrated strategy for conflict prevention, the participants welcomed the initiative of the Government of Japan to engage the international community in a joint action for the formulation of such a preventive strategy by the United Nations.

3. There was general agreement that: (a) the political will of the members of the international community for preventive action is essential for the successful conduct of United Nations preventive activities; (b) the problem of reconciling the legitimate concern of the international community and the respect for the principle of sovereignty should be carefully addressed; and (c) the question of providing the United Nations and regional organizations with financial resources for enhancing their preventive capabilities must be addressed seriously in order to establish a viable system of preventive strategy.

4. Particular focus is placed on the situation in Africa, where the implementation of such a strategy for conflict prevention is most urgently needed. The result of discussions held at this Conference can also have a practical application in various other regions, including Latin America, Asia and Europe, with necessary adjustments made to address the specific needs of those regions.

5. Based on this recognition, it is believed that the following policy recommendations, which have emerged from the discussions at the Conference, are among the most important elements to be pursued and elaborated in order to formulate and implement a new preventive strategy by the United Nations in cooperation with regional organizations:

(a) A conceptual framework for an integrated preventive strategy, based on the comprehensive and regional approaches, should be elaborated encompassing the whole United Nations system, regional organizations, countries in the conflict areas, donor countries and civil society. In this context, the role of women in conflict prevention should be emphasized. Such a framework should comprise, in particular, efforts to enhance the preventive capabilities of organizations to

respond to every phase in the evolution of conflicts, addressing (i) the fundamental root causes of conflict, (ii) factors that lead to the escalation of tension, (iii) factors that lead to the eruption of violence and (iv) factors that contribute to post-conflict peace-building;

(b) The promotion of economic and social progress, as well as the development of States and the well-being of people, is a prerequisite for conflict prevention. With this recognition, importance should be placed, inter alia, on efforts in such areas as (i) management of social diversity, (ii) alleviation of extreme poverty, (iii) construction of a functioning democratic community with full respect for human rights and the rule of law and (iv) promotion and consolidation of a community of values, such as tolerance;

(c) Close and organic cooperation should be pursued among all the actors involved at every phase of the preventive strategy, in particular, with respect to information collection and analysis and related policy decision capabilities of the United Nations and the regional organizations;

(d) Regional initiatives for conflict prevention should be promoted, wherever feasible, by regional organizations in full cooperation with the international community, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

(e) For preventive action to be effective, the time between the collection and analysis of data, the decision to take action, and the implementation of such a decision should be minimized through a series of schemes and measures, including rapid deployment arrangements and rapidly deployable headquarters;

(f) Institutional development for enhancing the operational capabilities of preventive strategy, including the early warning capabilities, of the United Nations and regional, as well as subregional organizations, should be promoted;

(g) The question of training personnel engaging in preventive strategy and of building institutional capability for such a strategy should be addressed in a comprehensive manner. For this purpose, a viable programme for training personnel at the United Nations and regional organizations should be pursued.

6. While a series of recommendations, as enumerated in 5 above, should be pursued as a system for preventive strategy, in the meantime, the following concrete measures could be considered for implementation on a case-by-case basis, as they meet with general acceptance within the organization concerned, since action is urgently needed in response to conflicts in various parts of the world, and particularly in Africa.

(a) Increased interaction and collaboration among the United Nations and regional, as well as subregional organizations, on the one hand, and with civil society, including non-governmental organizations, on the other;

(b) Close cooperation between the donor community, the United Nations system and regional organizations for putting concrete measures into operation, such as the enhancement of African capacity for conflict prevention, rapid deployment and other projects;

(c) Organic coordination within the preventive strategy among relevant United Nations bodies operating in the field in carrying out specific operations;

(d) Effective monitoring of the accumulation and transfer of small arms in potential conflict areas;

(e) Implementation of joint training programmes of the staff by the United Nations and relevant regional organizations, with a view to enhancing the preventive operational capability, in particular, in the areas of early warning and rapid deployment;

(f) Enhancement of the analytical capability of the United Nations and regional organizations to improve their early warning systems, in particular, through closer cooperation with external resources;

(g) Maintenance of regular contacts between the personnel engaging in preventive operations and external experts.

7. The participants welcomed the intention of the Government of Japan to do its best for the follow-up of this important report of the Tokyo International Conference on Preventive Strategy.